DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 156 610 SO 011 019

AUTHOR Mooney, Edward L.
TITLE Siddartha: An Introduction to Buddhism and Hinduism Yesterday and Today.
INSTITUTION Wright State Univ., Dayton, Ohio. Public Education Religion Studies Center.
SPONS AGENCY National Endowment for the Humanities (NFAH), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE [76]
NOTE 14p.; For related documents, see SO 011 012-024
AVAILABLE FROM Public Education Religion Studies Center, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio 45431 ($1.00, paper cover)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Asian History; Average Students; *Cross Cultural Studies; Grade 11; Learning Activities; *Literary History; *Novels; *Religious Education; Secondary Education; Teacher Developed Materials; Units of Study; *World Literature
IDENTIFIERS Buddhism; Hinduism

ABSTRACT

This three-week unit in world literature for 11th grade, average-ability students was developed as part of a series by the Public Education Religion Studies Center at Wright State University. An outline of the unit's content and subject matter is given. The novel "Siddhartha" is studied in its Hindu and Buddhist religious and cultural setting so that students learn of the historical origins of Hinduism and Buddhism, the beliefs and world views of the adherents, and the religious practices involved in these two faiths. Siddhartha's story is broken into three sections: his goal, the conflicts encountered in reaching his goal, and the resolution of his conflicts. A better understanding of the nature of religion and specifically the nature of Buddhism and Hinduism are two of seven cognitive objectives listed. Greater tolerance of other religions and improved research skills are examples from the seven affective and skill objectives. Fourteen initiatory, developmental, and culminating activities are described including audiovisual presentations, written reports, and special speakers. Suggestions for evaluation and a unit evaluation questionnaire are given. The document concludes with teacher and student references, and audiovisual materials. (BC)

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SIDDARTHA:
AN INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM AND HINDUISM YESTERDAY AND TODAY

prepared for
Eleventh Grade English

by
Edward L. Mooney
Bethpage High School
Bethpage, New York

for the
Teacher Education Institute on
the Religious Dimension of World Cultures
1976-77

sponsored by the
Public Education Religion Studies Center
Wright State University
Dayton, Ohio 45435

SP 011 019

and made possible by a grant from the
National Endowment for the Humanities

SIDDARTHA:
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INTRODUCTION

The literary subject matter of the 11th grade in our high school has traditionally been world literature. One of the novels taught for some years has been Siddhartha. In general the novel has been taught in somewhat of a vacuum. Aside from a brief treatment of Afro-Asian culture in 9th grade, these students have not been exposed to any of the religious cultures of the East. These 11th grade students are of average ability and come from a socio-economic middle class that is for the most part both conservative and parochial. Although the majority of the students have little knowledge or appreciation of the wide cultural diversity of the metropolitan New York area, they have a passing acquaintance with the Hare Krishna movement and Transcendental Meditation. These cultural and religious phenomena could provide a stepping stone to the investigation of Hinduism and Buddhism suggested in Siddhartha.

The unit would cover three weeks, 15-16 classes.

CONTENT

A. Certain generalizations underlying this unit are:
   1) Religion is an important factor of daily life.
   2) Religion is found embedded in a particular culture, not in a vacuum.
   3) Religion comprises both a world view and an ethos, i.e., one's picture of the way things in reality are, and the feeling, tone and attitude towards that world view.
   4) To correctly understand another religion, one should first clearly understand his own religious tradition or overall set of values, and then attempt to put aside the natural bias this traditional viewpoint gives him in order to see another religion as its followers do.
   5) A true understanding of any religion presumes not only a knowledge of beliefs held and customs followed in that religion, but also a sympathetic appreciation of a life or living permeated with such beliefs, customs and attitudes. (see 3 above).
   6. Many young people (e.g., Siddhartha) experience difficulty in accepting the religious tradition into which they have been born and in which they have been trained.

A. (cont'd)

7) Some people, after searching and coming in contact with new attitudes and life styles, change their religious tradition, or modify it to meet what they consider problems posed by their life situations.

Various concepts that should be clear to the students at the end of this unit are:

1) the difference between material and spiritual on the religious plane
2) the nature of meditation
3) the nature and purpose of self-denial and asceticism
4) "sacred" writings in religions (analogous to the Jewish-Christian Bible)
5) the nature of rituals and their wide variety
6) the syncretic element in many religions
7) the difference between looking at the world and stressing the individuality of things and looking at the world and stressing the underlying unity of things
8) the nature of reincarnation (samsara)
9) the nature of karma
10) Ideas specific to Hinduism include:
    -an ultimate reality, Brahman (or Brahman-Atman) with many inferior "gods"
    -caste
    -respect for all living things - ahimsa
    -yoga
    -dharma
11) Ideas specific to Buddhism include:
    -Nirvana
    -monastic life - sangha
    -the Middle Way
    -bodhisattva

B. Subject Matter Outline

1) Hinduism (2 1/2 days)
    a) Origin:
        -influx of Aryans into Indus Valley
        -mingling of Aryans and Dravidians
    b) Beliefs/World View:
        -Brahman, the Supreme reality
        -lesser "gods" under Brahman: Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu; Krishna, Prajapati
        -Atman, the individual soul, sometimes joined with Brahman
        -Man is subject to reincarnation (samsara) and Karma (cause and effect)
            -freedom from karma is moksha (liberation)
            -from the notion of karma follows <u>caste</u>
        -man's goal is union with Brahman
        -man should act according to dharma
        -man should be devoted to certain gods, e.g., Krishna
            -this is a <u>later</u> development

B. (cont'd)

-wisdom is found in sacred books:
-Vedic literature: e.g., Rig Veda (hymns); Upanishads (philosophical reflections)
-later works: e.g., Bhagavad Gita (an epic wherein Krishna gives instructions to his pupil Arjuna)

c) Religious Practices:
-rituals of offering (originally no temples)
-soma, grain, animals
-ablutions
-special prayers offered only by Brahmins
-practice of meditation and yoga
-celebration of various festivals
-special respect for animals
-pilgrimage to Benares, washing away of sin

d) Individual/family participation:
-many rituals are performed at the home shrine
-family members share the same tradition, but may worship different "gods"
-all theoretically go through the four stages:
-student: special thread ceremony for boys
-householder: marriage is a religious duty
-hermit
-wandering mendicant
-funerals, frequently ending by fire, have a special ceremony

e) Unifying force:
-the notion that all beings, in some way, participate in the ultimate reality of Brahman
-the four main castes and multitude of sub-castes keep the various elements of society together
-Hinduism's adoption of new ideas, e.g., Buddhism, and its adaptation to different needs, e.g., devotional nature of "bhakti", has given it a long and vigorous life.

2) Buddhism: (2 days)

a) Origin:
-dissatisfaction with Brahmin ritualism
-life of Buddha, ca. 563-483 BC

b) Beliefs/World View:
-Buddha is an "enlightened" person, not divine
-this idea is modified in Mahayana Buddhism
-no special rituals - the Middle Way instead
-this also was changed later is some groups
-belief in rebirth and karma
-no caste system
-goal of life is Nirvana, cessation of desire
-goal of life is achieved by:
-understanding the four Noble Truths
-following the Eight-fold path
-by joining a monastic community
-or, by building shrines, helping in the upkeep of shrines, offering flowers to Buddha;

B. (cont'd)

making pilgrimages to sacred places, etc.
-these are all later developments
-Buddhist "scriptures" can be seen, in part, in a collection like that in The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha

c) Religious practices:
-the monk meditates, dresses in a yellow robe, begs for his food, etc.
-participation in ceremonies, e.g., see b) above
-Buddhist practices use various symbolic objects, e.g., images of Buddha, incense, flowers, the juzu (rosary), wheel of the law, etc.

d) Divisions:
-Theravada (Hinayana)
-supposedly more faithful to teachings of Buddha
-Buddha is human
-stressed monasticism and strenuous discipline strong in Burma and southeast Asian countries
-Mahayana
-Buddha is "divine"
-supposedly follows later writings of Buddhism
-stresses faith and devotion, ideal of the bodhisattva, cult of Amitabha
-spread to China and Japan

e) Individual/family participation:
-some young men may enter the monastery for a time, aside from the full-time monks

f) Unifying force:
-the doctrine of the middle way, a mean between extreme ritualism and extreme asceticism
-Buddhism has held together despite the divergent teachings of the Mahayana group. The more devotional aspect of this group appealed to people of other lands, e.g., China and Japan

3) Siddhartha: (6 days)

a) the story: Siddhartha
-at home (Brahmins)
-with the Samanas (asceticism)
-with the Buddha
-in the city (pleasure)
-with the ferrymen (achieving his goal)

b) Siddhartha's conflicts in reaching his goal:
-with Brahmin life style/his father
-examples of Hinduism
-with the Samanas
-allied to extremes of Jainism
-with the Buddha
examples of Buddhism
-with city life - Kamala and Kamaswami
-"ordinary" people - life of pleasure and acquisitiveness
-with despair at the river

B. (cont'd)
c) Siddhartha's resolution of his conflict - aided by the ferryman and the river
-his "enlightenment," his reaching "nirvana"
-his syncretic world view; he retains elements of Hinduism and Buddhism
-wisdom is not communicable (though he has learned from teachers)
-importance of learning through (sometimes painful) experience
-unity of all things - cyclic nature of things (father-son conflict)
-things are lovable in themselves; things are more important than thoughts

C. Vocabulary to be learned:
-In addition to the words mentioned in IIA, under new concepts, the following words should be explained:
-Brahmin (Kshatryas, Vaishas, Shudras)
-Brahman: Vishnu, Shiva
-Krishna (Vasudeva)
-Prajapati
-Samanas - asceticism - self-denial
-Om, mantra
-Atman
-Mara
-Maya
-Vedas: Rig-Veda, Upanishads
-Buddha
-Amitabha Buddha
-bodhisattva

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. On the cognitive level:
1) a better understanding of the nature of religion
-the intermingling of world view and ethos
-how it is found "bound up" in a particular culture
-how it makes use of a variety of symbols which clarify world view and ethos
2) a better understanding of how one's religion naturally tends to create a bias in looking at another religion. E.g., our Western approach looks for "logical" explanations in other religions; we tend to describe phenomena of other religions in strictly Western terms; we tend to divide and categorize
3) a better understanding of how some individuals (e.g., Siddhartha) have difficulty in adjusting to or modifying or changing their religious tradition
4) a clearer understanding of some different religious traditions in their own milieu (cf. Activities)
5) a better understanding of how some problems that youth face today (conflict with parental life-style) are not new, and can sometimes be seen more

A. (cont'd)
objectively through a historical perspective (e.g., this novel)
6) more specifically, the over-all similarities and differences of Hinduism and Buddhism
7) the falseness of oversimplifying any religion, especially these two Eastern religions

B. On the affective level:
1) a greater tolerance for other religions
2) a better "feel" for other religions, an empathetic understanding
3) a new "awareness" of different religious life-styles around them, in class, in school, etc.
4) a deeper sensitivity to the "other side of the coin" in human problems, e.g., parents' side of a disagreement.

C. Skills:
1) an improvement in listening skills, e.g., to slide-tape presentations, lectures, and class discussions
2) an improvement in research skills, whether through library work or through questioning individuals for a report
3) an improvement in observation, e.g., symbols of a religious tradition in their surroundings

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

A. Initiatory:
1) a brief, written summary of the students' ideas on Hinduism and Buddhism. Frequently occuring ideas could be written on the board for brief discussion. (Summaries to be returned to students later to help them revamp some of their ideas).
2) a slide-tape presentation on Hinduism to immediately get the students, mentally and visually, into the atmosphere of India
3) a brief oral discussion of students' ideas on the nature of Transcendental Meditation (from India) and on the Hare Krishna movement, also to make them more aware of Indian culture and religion

B. Developmental:
1) slide-tape presentation of Buddhism - after the treatment of Hinduism
2) a visit to the school library to see books on Hinduism and Buddhism and/or a "show-and-tell" day for pictures or objects connected with Hinduism or Buddhism
3) teachers' "show-and-tell" can be personal slides (not all religious) taken in India and Bangkok

B. (cont'd)

4) as the students progress through the novel, a special discussion day could be had on youth-parent problems, jumping off from Siddhartha's differences with his father, and S. Jr.'s problems with his father
5) one special day in the unit could be devoted to a lecturer (e.g., a follower of Hare Krishna, a Chinese-born social studies teacher recently returned from the Orient)
6) a special project would be assigned for turning in at the end of the Unit for part of the final grade. Some topics could be:
   - -two to three page written report on some particular aspect of Hinduism or Buddhism touched on only briefly in class, e.g., caste, treatment of animals, stories about Buddha's early life
   - -two to three page written report on the status of Hinduism or Buddhism today, or in a particular country, e.g., China or Japan
   - -a two to three page written report on some unusual religious group in the United States, e.g., Trappist monks, Hasidic Jews, Amish people, etc.
   - - a collage of pictures and sayings highlighting aspects of Hinduism or Buddhism
   - - a written (or oral) report on interviewing some friend or acquaintance from an Eastern culture and religion
7) Part of two different classes could be spent reading and reacting to some short excerpt from Hindu and Buddhist literature, e.g., from the Bhagavad-Gita, and from the Dhammapada (Twin Voices, Flowers, The Saint)
8) Have a bulletin board set aside for pictures and articles on Hinduism and Buddhism. Extra credit for those who bring something in

C. Culminating:

1) presentation of some of the students' projects with reactions from the rest of the class
2) reshowing of the original slide-tape presentations (or possibly a different, more difficult set) to bring things together, give a sense of accomplishment, and for some, hopefully, to stimulate questions on the accuracy of the slides themselves
3) If the unit went well, a small group of students could have a 20-25 minute discussion on the relative merits of some Eastern religious group's life-style and some Western religious group's life-style.

EVALUATION

A. An essay test would focus on an overall understanding and appreciation of Hinduism and Buddhism, and a sensitive appreciation of Siddhartha's search for his particular goal. Some possible questions would be:
- Do you see any special value in the Hindu tradition of meditation and Yoga self-discipline? Why do you feel it has remained important for some followers of Hinduism through the centuries? Do you feel it has any special value for people of the 20th century?
- Why did Buddha reject most of the spiritual practices traditional among the Hindus of his day? Do you feel that rituals have a place in religions today? Give two to three specific examples of your opinion about the use of religious rituals today.
- Do you agree with Siddhartha's statement that there is value in a life of fasting, waiting, and meditating? Why do you feel this way?
- Has this unit on Siddhartha made you reflect more on your own religious tradition or set of values? Has it helped you understand better the significance of some of the beliefs and practices or the attitudes in your tradition or life-style? Can you give some examples of your previous statements?

B. The students will be evaluated by:
- their initial (non-objective) summary of their ideas on Hinduism and Buddhism
- their marks on 2-3 preannounced quizzes on certain sections of Siddhartha
- their "show and tell" presentation
- their project
- participation in some discussion
- the essay test

C.-D. Other criteria:
- the last day of the unit an Evaluation Sheet can be given to the students:
  1) Do you feel you know more about Hinduism and Buddhism than you did before we began this unit? (Yes-No) Briefly explain....
  2) Do you feel you appreciate more some belief(s) or practice(s) in the Hindu or Buddhist religion than you did before we began this unit? (Yes-No) Briefly explain....
  3) How valuable do you think the slide presentations were:
     - the Time-Life series...
     - teacher slides...
  4) Do you think the novel Siddhartha has value for us? (Yes-No) Why?
  5) Has this unit made you reflect more on what religion means to a person? (Yes-No) Briefly explain...
  6) Do you feel the explanations the teacher gave on Hinduism and Buddhism were clear? (Yes-No) Briefly explain...

C.-D. (continued)

7) Are there still certain points about these religions that are quite unclear to you? (Yes-No) What are they?

8) Of the various things we have done in this unit, which do you feel was the most valuable? Briefly explain....

9) Of the various things we have done in this unit, which do you feel was the least valuable? Briefly explain....

10) Would you like to find out more about some other religion and life style by reading about someone who lives in it? (Yes-No) Briefly explain...

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

A. Teacher:

1) General Works:

Basham, A.L. The Wonder That Was India. New York: Grove Press, 1959.

Clark, Leon E.,ed. Through Indian Eyes. 2 vols. World Culture Series. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974.

Noss, John B. Man's Religions. New York: Macmillan, 1974.

Parrinder, Geoffrey. Worship in the World's Religions. Totowa, New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1976.

Streng, Frederick J. Understanding Religious Man. Encino, Ca: Dickenson Publishing Co., 1969.

2) Hinduism:

Hopkins, Thomas J. The Hindu Religious Tradition. Encino, Ca: Dickenson Publishing Co., 1971.

Morgan, Kenneth W., ed. The Religion of the Hindus. New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1953.

Organ, Troy Wilson. Hinduism: Its Historical Development. Woodbury, New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1974.

Prabhavananda, Swami and Isherwood, Christopher, trans. Bhagavad-Gita: The Song of God. A Mentor Religious Classic. New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1951.

A. (continued)

Prabhavananda, Swami and Manchester, Frederick, trans. The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal. A Mentor Religious Classic. New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1957.

Renou, Louis, ed. Hinduism. New York: George Braziller, 1962.

3) Buddhism:

Burtt, E.A. The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha. A Mentor Religious Classic. New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1955.

Ch'en, Kenneth K.S. Buddhism: The Light of Asia. Woodbury, New York: Barron's Educational Series Inc., 1968.

Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism. Revised by Dona Luisa Coomaraswamy. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964.

Dumoulin, Heinrich, ed. Buddhism in the Modern World. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1976.

Gard, Richard, ed. Buddhism. New York: George Braziller, 1962.

Humphreys, Christman. Buddhism. Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, 1951.

Suzuki, Beatrice Lane. Mahayana Buddhism. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969.

4) Siddhartha:

Cliff Notes. Steppenwolf and Siddhartha. Lincoln, Nebraska: Cliff Notes, Inc., 1973.

Field, George W. Hermann Hesse. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1970.

Rose, Ernst. Faith from the Abyss: Hermann Hesse's Way from Romanticism to Modernity. New York: New York University Press, 1965.

Ziolkowski, Theodore. The Novels of Hermann Hesse: A Study in Theme and Structure. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965.

B. Student:

1) General Works:

Ballou, Robert O., ed. The World Bible. New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1972.
Contains selections from the sacred writings of the various world religions, and short readable introductory essays to each religion.

Bradley, David G. A Guide to the World's Religions. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.
Brief, clear, many headings help.

Gaer, Joseph. What the Great Religions Believe. New York: Dodd,Mead, 1963.
Suitable for secondary level students. Incorporates relevant scriptural passages in the text.

Noss, John B. Man's Religions. New York: Macmillan, 1974.
Complete, good for reference on particular points.

Rice, Edward. The Five Great Religions. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1973.
Personalized, readable text. Has many photographs taken by the author.

Ross, Floyd H. and Hills, Tynette. The Great Religions by Which Men Live. Greenwich, CT: Fawcett World Library-Premier, 1966.
Highly readable and thought provoking. A sympathetic introduction to the study of world religions

Smith, Huston. The Religions of Man. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1958.
Interesting, warm treatment; a result of his TV talks on the same subject.

2) Hinduism:

Hughes, Catherine. The Smokeless Fire: Hindu Mystical Reflections. New York: The Seabury Press, 1974.
Brief introduction to Hinduism, followed by brief excerpts from the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads, etc., and photographs in Western settings.

3) Buddhism:

Burtt, E.A. The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha. A Mentor Religious Classic. New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1955.
Early selections are relatively short; all sections have a brief introduction

B. (continued)

Byrom, Thomas, Tr. The Dhammapada: The Sayings of the Buddha. New York: Vintage Books, 1976.
Each chapter arranged in attractive poetic form, with a full-page reflective photograph

Dumoulin, Heinrich, ed. Buddhism in the Modern World. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1976.
Good reference for student projects; has a chapter on "The Influence of Buddhism in the United States."

Hughes, Catherine. The Solitary Journey: Buddhist Mystical Reflections. New York: The Seabury Press, 1974.
Like her book on Hinduism, but it does not give the specific source of the selections.

C. Audio-Visual Materials:

1) Filmstrips:

Coronet Filmstrips: "Hinduism"; "Buddhism"
Coronet Instructional Media, 65 E. South Water St., Chicago, IL. 61601.
Colorful and well done. Each is 141/2 minutes

Inter-Culture Series: "Hinduism"; "Buddhism"
Box 277, Thompson, Ct.
Scholarly and well done, but they demand a longer attention span than the other two listed here, especially the one on Hinduism. The one on Hinduism is 20 mintes; the one on Buddhism 13 minutes.

Time-Life Series: "Hinduism"; "Buddhism" in "The World's Great Religions" series.
Time-Life Educational Program, Box 834, Radio City Post Office, New York, NY 10019.
These are well done, clear and interesting, both in two parts. The best of those listed here.

2) Personal slides taken in India and Bangkok. The latter show several Buddhist temples and young monks.